SOLIDARITY

AFRO-ASIAN PEOPLES' SOLIDARITY ORGANIZATION

March 2018

SOLIDARITY

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Bulletin

March 2018

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AFRO-ASIAN PEOPLES' SOLIDARITY ORGANIZATION (AAPSO)

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AAPSO Activities

International Women's Day

International Women's Day is a time to reflect on progress made, challenges, to call for change and to celebrate acts of courage and determination by ordinary women who have played an extraordinary role in the history of their countries and communities. It is also an occasion to be reminded that the road remains long and full of obstacles. It is a time to pay tribute to the countless women throughout history who have dared to stand up, to protest, and to say no to discrimination against women and girls and one of its worst manifestations: violence. Their courage and revolt have been the driving force behind the progress made.

International Women's Day comes on the heels of unprecedented global movement for women's rights, empowering women, equality and justice.
One of the main challenges that we need to focus on it is Sexual harassment, violence and discrimination against women have captured headlines and public discourse, propelled by a rising determination for change.

The fact is that sexual harassment is part and parcel of daily life, particularly in public places especially in Arab counties as it's used to curtail a woman's freedom.

Data from the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, also known as UN Women, reveal that almost four in 10 women have experienced sexual or physical violence from a partner in their lifetime.

It is estimated that 35 per cent of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or sexual violence by a non-partner at some point in their lives. However, some national studies show that up to 70 per cent of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence from an intimate partner in their lifetime.

Women all over the world had suffered severely from the atrocities of the terrorist organization, killing, raping, total humiliation to human dilemma, such acts compiled with great dilemma of this century that is the problem of refugees and its consequences, particularly the unhuman conditions they are facing a woman in the core.

On this International Women's Day, Afro Asian People's Solidarity Organization urge Governments, civil society and the private sector to commit to gender equality and the empowerment of women politically and economically – as a fundamental human right and a force for the benefit of all. The energy, talent and strength of women and girls represent humankind's most valuable untapped natural resource.

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NGOs

Willful Killings

Since Oct. 2015, about 374 Palestinians including 88 children and 20 women, were killed. During February 2018, nine Palestinians were killed, and another 330 Palestinians were wounded.

Palestinian Prisoners

514 Palestinian citizens were arrested by Israeli troops and another 56 Palestinian citizens were detained for several hours.

According to Palestinian Prisoners Club:
The administrative detainees at the Israeli occupation jails implemented a decision to boycott the Israeli occupation military courts. The lawyer of the Palestinian Prisoner's Society Mahmoud Halabi who represents the administrative detainees at courts assured that the detainees implemented the boycott and that the lawyers committed to the prisoners' decision. In its statement, the Palestinian Prisoner's Society stated that the number of the administrative detainees reached around (450) detainees , most of them were rear-rested for several times, and that the number of years that some of them spent in jail as administrative detainees is (14) years. It is mentioned that the number of the administrative detention orders within the last three years has reached 1248 in 2015, and 1742 in 2016, while it reached 1060 administrative detention order in 2017.

Sixty per cent of Palestinian children who were arrested by Israeli occupation forces were verbally, physically or psychologically tortured, the Palestinian Prisoners' Club (PPC) revealed yesterday.
In a statement, the PPC said that the Palestinian minors detained by the Israeli occupation were prevented from sleeping, beaten and threatened by interrogators in order to confess.

The statement also said that the Palestinian children were prevented from eating and drinking for long periods and were insulted. They were also subjected to hours of interrogations. Accounts of three Palestinian minor prisoners, who are currently inside Israeli prisons, were included in the PPC's report. Mustafa Al-Badan, 17, Faisal Al-Shaer, 16, and Ahmed Al-Shalaldeh, 15, told the PPC that they were tortured when they were investigated. There are currently more than 6,500 Palestinians being held in the Israeli occupation's jails, including 57 women and girls and 350 children.

The Media

During February 2018 and according to the Palestinian Ministry of Infor-mation report, 27 Israeli violations against the Palestinian journalism and Journalists were documented includ-ing 18 against male journalists, 1 against female journalists and four against a journalism crew.

Judaization of Jerusalem

According to Wadi Hilweh Informa-tion Centre, during February 2018:

Al-Aqsa Mosque
Settlers continued breaking into Al-Aqsa Mosque during the daily morn-ing and afternoon break-in sessions except for Fridays and Saturdays. Break-ins are conducted through Dung Gate which is controlled by the occupation authorities since the occu-pation of the city of Jerusalem.
In Feruary, 2127 settlers broke into Al-Aqsa.

Church of the Holy Sepulcher
The Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Occupied Jerusalem closed its doors for 3 consecutive days(Feb. 25th-27th) in protest against the occupation's decision to impose taxes on church property, which was rejected by the churches as it contradicts with the international law and is an attempt to break the established statutes of 1852.
The heads of the Christian churches in Jerusalem only decided to reopen the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in the city, following the decision of the occupation authorities to freeze their decision to impose taxes on church property.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the head of the occupation municipality, Nir Barkat, issued a decision to freeze the imposition of taxes on churches and church properties in Jerusalem and to set up a committee to discuss a new route to the imposition of property taxes on Christian churches in Jerusalem. During the three-day closure, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher has been crowded with pilgrims from all over the world and worshipers from the city of Jerusalem. These days are considered sacred to Christians, the 40 days of fasting before Easter holiday.

Arrests
The Israeli authorities continued executing daily arrests in the city of Jerusalem. The information centre monitored 170 cases of arrests in the city including 2 women, one elderly man, 4 children under 12 years old - age of responsibility- and 69 minors.

Demolitions

The Israeli occupation authorities continued demolishing residential, agricultural and commercial structures in the city of Jerusalem under the pre-text of building without a permit.

The Information Center monitored the demolition of 19 one: 9 in Beit Safafa, 3 in Essawiya, 3 in Silwan, 2 in Beit Hanina and 2 in Shu'fat.

Assaulting Jerusalemites

1- A group of settlers attacked and injured 19-year old Jerusalemite Mustafa Ibrahim Mughrabi near Al-Silsileh Gate Road in the Old City of Jerusalem.

The Palestinian Red Crescent said that its crews transported a young man to the Hadassah Ein Kerem hospital after being hit on the head; his condition was described as stable.

Witnesses reported that between 25 and 30 settlers insulted a group of young men in Al-Silsileh Gate after they had stormed Al-Aqsa Mosque. Witnesses added that the settlers beat the young man Mustafa Mughrabi, while beating his face with iron doors several times, where he was wounded in the face and lost con-sciousness afterwards.

Shadi Al-Mughrabi, Mustafa's cousin, said the doctors told the family that Mustafa's health was stable and was under surveillance. Initial tests showed that he had nose fractures and internal bleeding.

Mughrabi said that the settlers assaulted his cousin while he was near his house, after they left Al-Aqsa Mosque, and beat him with an iron door and a glass bottle.

He added that the forces arrested the two young men Osama Halhuli and Hamouda after the settlers at-tacked his cousin.

2- An extremist settler wrote racist slogans on a vehicle and slashed the tires of five othe vehicles parked in the area of Dung Gate in Silwan, owned by Haleisi and Ajloni fami-lies. Surveillance cameras showed a settler getting out of his private vehicle around 2:30 a.m. and stormed Haleisi compound to carry out the assault.

3- Israeli intelligence and occupation forces stormed and searched the Philadelphia restaurant on Al-Zahra Street in Occupied Jerusalem, and prevented a dinner for Jerusalemite journalists and closed the restaurant until Sunday morning.

The Israeli intelligence services placed a decision banning dinner at the restaurant and elsewhere, under the pretext of being organized by the Democratic Front. According to the ban, this event is for a "terrorist organization", and the order was is-sued by the "commander of the Jerusalem area."

The occupation intelligence arrested the director of the Elia Youth Media Foundation Ahmed Safadi, and the owner of the restaurant Zuheir Izhi-man, while Shadi Matour, secretary of Fatah movement in Jerusalem and Awad Salaymeh, member of Fateh movement, received summons for interrogation.

Church of the Holy Sepulcher

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Settling

The Israeli Planning and Building committee approved the construction of 3377 new settlement units in dif-ferent illegal settlements throughout the West Bank & Occupied Jerusalem.

Groups of Israeli extremist settlers conducted many attacks against the Palestinian property and people, as a result: 3 Palestinian citizens were wounded, one Palestinian car was damaged, ten sheeps were killed, and 120 dunums of land were razed.

Christians, the 40 days of fasting be-fore Easter holiday.

Arrests

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Demolitions

House Demolition

The Israeli Authorities demolished and issued notices either to demolish or halt the construction or evacuate more than 22 Palestinian homes, commercial establishments and structures in different places of the West Bank including Occupied Jerusalem.

the young man Mustafa Mughrabi, while beating his face with iron doors several times, where he was wounded in the face and lost consciousness afterwards.

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Mughrabi said that the settlers assaulted his cousin while he was near his house, after they left Al-Aqsa Mosque, and beat him with an iron door and a glass bottle.

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Ending Occupation and Lifting Closure is Solution to End Humanitarian Crisis in the Gaza Strip

Brussels: In light of the aggravating humanitarian crises resulting from the Israeli practices, 11 years of inhuman and illegal closure and collective punishment against 2 million people, PCHR warned of the explosion of the situation in the Gaza Strip. PCHR also warned of the exploitation of the humanitarian crisis to undermine the Palestinian right to end the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territory occupied in 1967 and denial of the Palestinian people's inalienable rights, primarily the right to self-determination and return of refugees, through paving the way for establishing a political entity in the Gaza Strip, pointing out to the latest discussions in the White House and Trump Administration's plan of complete coordination with Israel.

All of the abovementioned was said by Deputy Director of the Palestinian center for human rights (PCHR) for Programs Affairs, Hamdi Shaqqura, during a panel discussion on the situation in the Gaza Strip organized by Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EuroMed Rights) in Brussels on Wednesday morning, with a broad participation of the Palestinian, Arab, Israeli and international Member Organizations and many international development organizations active in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt). Shaqqura said that the situation in the Gaza Strip is on the verge of collapse and is a direct result of the occupation and closure, which has paralyzed all productive sectors and infrastructure. He added that the only way to end the humanitarian crisis is by ending the occupation and lifting the closure.

Shaqqoura condemned the silence of the international community and its failure to take effective measures to confront the Israeli crimes. He added that the international community has bet on a barren peace process through which international law and human rights have been sacrificed. However, Israel has turned against this process because Israel wanted to create facts on the ground making it impossible to end the occupation and establish a Palestinian state. Shaqqoura added that the history of the occupation is a history of deepening separation and the dismemberment of the oPt in order to tighten control over it by intensifying settlement activity through land looting and building the annexation wall on the one hand and imposing restrictions on freedom of movement on the other hand as we rudely see in the Gaza Strip and all the West Bank, which turned into geographically unrelated cantons. Moreover, Israel established a peerless system of apartheid where settlers dominate as their number has grown more than threefold since the beginning of the settlement process.

Shaqoura stressed on the importance of supporting national reconciliation efforts and ending the internal division, calling upon the two parties to the division to give preference to national interests and to proceed seriously in order to achieve reconciliation in a way that guarantees rehabilitating the political system and Palestinian Authority institutions and holding the general elections.

As Member of the Executive Committee of EuroMed Rights and a political reference to the EuroMed Rights Working Group on Israel/Palestine and the Palestinians, PCHR's Deputy Director for Programs Affairs opened an international workshop organized by the Group in Brussels on Monday and Tuesday 26 and 27 March, with active participation of human rights organizations members, Palestinian, Arab and Israeli, with the active participation of Palestinian, Israeli and Arab human rights Member

Organizations and other international human rights and development organizations. The workshop addressed the crackdown on civil society, especially the policies and measures practiced by Israel that have affected the human rights organizations.

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Israeli Forces Directly Target Peaceful Demonstrations in Gaza Strip, Killing 9 Civilians and Wounding 709 Others, including 121 Children and 26 Women, Without Posing Threat to Soldiers' Life

On Friday afternoon, 30 March 2018, Israeli forces killed 9 Palestinian civilians and wounded 709 others, including 121 children and 26 women in the Gaza Strip, in excessive use of forces and upon a political decision at the highest political level in Israel to suppress hundred thousands of civilians participating in fully peaceful protests within hundreds meters away from the border fence with Israel. Israeli forces directly targeted these protesters without any justification and without the latter posing threat or danger to life of the Israeli soldiers.

According to field observations by fieldworkers of the Palestinian Center for Human Rights (PCHR), dozens of Israeli snipers stationed behind sand barriers along the border fence, east of the Gaza Strip, sporadically and deliberately opened fire at the participants in the peaceful assemblies that included hundred thousands of civilians and concentrated in 5 areas in the eastern Gaza Strip. As a result, civilians were directly killed and wounded.

The observations of PCHR's fieldworkers revealed that the Israeli forces focused on targeting the participants in the back rows of the demonstration as they were falling one by one around 300 meters away from the border fence in addition to others who attempted in a few numbers to approach the fence. This proves that there is an official decision to kill and cause bodily harm to the demonstrators, in conformity with the policy of intimidation adopted by the Israeli forces, spokespersons, and officials during the past few days to reduce the public participation.

According to PCHR's investigations, on Friday early morning, 30 March 2018, ten thousands of civilians, including women and children, within entire families started swarming to 5 camps established by the Supreme National Authority for the Great March of Return and Breaking Siege in eastern Rafah City; Khuza'ah in Khan Younis; al-Bureij in Central Gaza Strip; Shuja'iyah neighborhood in Gaza City; and Eastern Jabalia in the northern Gaza Strip.

Israeli forces early started to target the assemblies, which were fully peaceful, inflicting dozens of casualties.

Following the Friday Prayer, the number of participants in the five assemblies increased, reaching to hundred thousands of men, elderlies, women and children. They were standing dozens to hundreds meters away from the border fence and raising the Palestinian flags, while only a few numbers of them attempted to approach the border fence in order to throw stones and raise flags.

The Israeli forces fired live bullets at the protesters. As a result, -until 17:00 on today according to PCHR's fieldworkers' documentation- 8 protesters were killed, including 2 in eastern Jabalia, 4 in eastern Gaza City and 2 in eastern Rafah. All of them were hit in the upper part of the body; head, chest and abdomen.

Moreover, 708 civilians were wounded, including 121 children, 26 women and a journalist, in addition to hundreds suffering tear gas inhalation after tear gas canisters were heavily fired by the soldiers stationed along the border fence and by drones hovering over the protesters.

It should be noted that the Israeli forces are still targeting the protesters, portending the increase of victims' number.

Those killed were identified as:

1) Mohammed Kamal al-Najjar (25) from the northern Gaza Strip was hit with a bullet to the abdomen, east of Jabalia.
2) 'Abdel Fattah Bahjat 'Abdel Nabi (19) from the northern Gaza Strip was hit with a bullet to the head, east of Jabalia.
3) Mahmoud Sa'di Younis Rohmi (34) from Gaza City was hit with a bullet to the chest, east of Gaza.

4) Jihad Ahmed Freinah (35) from Gaza was hit with a bullet to the head, east of Gaza.
5) Ahmed Ibrahim 'Ashour 'Odah (19) from al-Shati' Refugee Camp was hit with a bullet to the head, east of Gaza.
6) Mohammed Na'im Mohammed Abu 'Omer (25) from al-Shija'iyah was hit with a bullet to the abdomen, east of Gaza.
7) Amin Mahmoud Mansour Mo'amar (25) from Rafah was hit with a bullet to the head, east of Gaza.
8) Ibrahim Salah Abu Sha'er (20) from Rafah was hit with a bullet to the head, east of Rafah.

At approximately 04:30 today, Israeli forces fired 2 artillery shells at 2 civilians who were collecting parcel from an agricultural land around 1000 meters away from the border fence with Israel, east of al-Qararah. As a result, one of them, namely 'Omer Wahid Nasrallah Abu Sammour (27), was killed arrived pieces at the Gaza European Hospital while the other sustained moderate wounds. Both civilians had to wait half an hour in the scene until the medical crews could have access and take them to the hospital.

This huge number of victims proves that the Israeli forces continue to commit further crimes and use of excessive force against Palestinian civilians in disregard for their lives upon an official political decision. PCHR emphasizes that before occurrence of demonstrations –previously declared by the organizers as peaceful demonstrations only calling for implementation of United Nation (UN) Resolution 194 and raising only Palestinian and UN flags-, the Israeli forces sent threatening letters to intimidate the organizers and Gaza Strip residents in addition to deploying snipers and dog sniffer unit along the borders with Gaza as declared by Spokesperson of the Israeli Army on his Facebook page. The spokesperson also threatened that " if needed, we will respond in the center of the Gaza Strip against those behind these violent protests," Hinting about committing crimes of extra-judicial killings (assassinations).

PCHR hereby condemns this new crime committed by the Israeli forces that resulted in this huge number of causalities, killed and wounded, believing it is as a result of the international community's silence towards the crimes committed by the Israeli forces upon an official decision at the highest military and political levels. PCHR points out that the targeting this time was against explicitly peaceful assemblies that include hundred thousands, including thousands of children and women, and by directly firing live bullets without those demonstrators posing any threat to life of soldiers and in disregard by the Israeli forces for the life of hundred thousands of demonstrators.

PCHR warns that as long as Israel continues to deny the rights of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and impose a tightened closure on them in addition to refusing to implement the UN resolutions relevant to refugees and their rights, these demonstrations are expected to continue and increase; a fact that will require the international community and UN Bodies' intervention to stop the Israeli escalating violations and crimes and to provide international protection for Palestinians in the occupied territory.

PCHR also reiterates its call upon the High Contracting Parties to the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention to fulfill their obligations under Article 1; i.e., to respect and ensure respect for the Convention in all circumstances and their obligations under Article 146 to prosecute persons alleged to commit grave breaches of the Fourth Geneva Convention. These grave breaches constitute war crimes under Article 147 of the same Convention and Protocol (I) Additional to the Geneva Conventions regarding the guarantee of Palestinian civilians' right to protection in the occupied territories.

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For a Nuclear Weapon-Free, Peaceful and Just World:
A Call for Support to and Participation in the 2018 World Conference against A &H Bombs

The 81st General Meeting, Organizing Committee of the World Conference against A and H Bombs
February 15, 2018

Dear friends,
This summer will mark the 73rd anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We cordially call on all of you to give support to and participate in the 2018 World Conference against A and H Bombs (August 2-4: International Meeting; August 4-6: Hiroshima Conference; August 8-9: Nagasaki Conference) with the theme: "For a Nuclear Weapon-Free, Peaceful and Just World)

We now stand at the new stage in History toward achieving a world without nuclear weapons. The adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons that makes nuclear weapons illegal in express terms presents a new vision for creating a nuclear weapon-free world. Also, the role of the Hibakusha (A-bomb survivors) and civil society played in achieving this treaty has been recognized worldwide with growing international attention, as seen in the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to ICAN (International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons) and the meeting of Pope with the Hibakusha.

"Humanity and nuclear weapons cannot coexist." "These weapons are not a necessary evil; they are the ultimate evil." (Setsuko Thurlow at the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize Ceremony) Now is the time to spread the voices of the Hibakusha across the world, and move forward from the prohibition to the elimination of nuclear weapons. This year's World Conference will be a rallying point for the anti-nuclear peace movements of Japan and the world and the representatives of the United Nations and national/local governments to present future perspectives for a world without nuclear weapons. Let us work together to achieve a great success of this historic conference.

Friends,
To this day, the World Conference has developed as the forum for proposing and setting out joint efforts and cooperation among anti-nuclear peace movements and the U.N. and national governments aiming to achieve a nuclear weapon-free world. The participation of the U.N. High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Nakamitsu Izumi in the 2017 World Conference and the message of solidarity received from Ambassador Elayne Whyte, President of the negotiation conference of the Prohibition Treaty showed their high appreciation to our movement. This year's World Conference will likely draw greater attention than previous years, as seen in inquiries and requests from international anti-nuclear movements about their participation in the conference.

Achieving a successful 2018 World Conference has a great significance for enhancing international opinion calling for the entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, inter alia, for developing the movements in the nuclear weapon states and their allies to urge their governments to sign and ratify the treaty, and for making major progress to achieve a total ban and elimination of nuclear weapons.

Friends,
For attaining a nuclear weapon-free world, we must overcome all challenges to this goal. North Korea's nuclear and missile programs and heightened military tension between the U.S. and North Korea clearly show the grave danger of confrontation involving nuclear force. The U.S. Trump Administration in its newly announced Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) shows its increased willingness to use nuclear weapons and is accelerating new nuclear armament. We firmly refuse such moves that run counter to the present momentum for a nuclear weapon-free world and may lead to catastrophic consequences like Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Now that an overwhelming majority of national governments and civil society organizations are in favor of the Treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons, the nuclear-armed states are driven into isolation. We must make the 2018 World Conference a place

where we discuss together how to overcome the clinging of the nuclear-armed states and their allies to "nuclear deterrence" and open up perspectives for advancing the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Friends,
What is now required of the Japanese peace movement is to fundamentally change the direction of the government of this country. Despite having the peace Constitution established based on its lessons from Hiroshima-Nagasaki calamity, the Japanese government continues to embrace the nuclear policy of the U.S. under its "nuclear umbrella" and turns its back to the nuclear prohibition treaty. In order to carry out the international responsibility of the Japanese movement, we cordially call on the domestic organizations and individuals to endorse and participate in the World Conference.

The World Conference has upheld the three fundamental goals to abolish nuclear weapons, prevent nuclear war and support the Hibakusha in solidarity. As seen in its theme, "For a Nuclear Weapon-Free, Peaceful and Just World", it is a forum for deepening solidarity among a broad range of people from the world who work for the opposition to war and for peace and achieving justice in economy and society.

For the Japanese peace movement, the World Conference will be the place where we will urge the government of Japan to break away from the "nuclear umbrella", to support, sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, and to take initiatives to achieve the ban and elimination of nuclear weapons. Diversified range of movements will rally there to join their forces in solidarity. They include campaigns to block Abe's attempt to change Article 9 of the Constitution; abrogate the Security Laws (= War Laws) and revive constitutionalism; stop the construction of a new military base at Henoko, Okinawa; close all nuclear power plants; advocate people's living and welfare system; and eliminate social gaps and poverty.

The International Hibakusha Appeal Signature Campaign, with the aim of achieving signatures from hundreds of millions of people around the world by 2020, is gaining ground and taken up by local governments and communities, beyond the difference of movements. In the Nagasaki Resolution of the 2017 World Conference against A and H Bombs, based on the development of cooperation between the citizens' movements, we called on the people to step into forming a new broader cooperation of the people. The advance of joint struggles between the citizens' movement and opposition parties in national elections has brought about the emerging of the Citizens' Actions at different parts of Japan, and they are promoting the "petition campaign for the protection of Article 9 of the Constitution". With an aim to move forward from the prohibition to abolition of nuclear weapons, we call on the people to build up unity among the Japanese people, overcoming past complications or barriers.

Friends,
We are sending out our heartfelt appeal to achieve a success of the historic World Conference. Let us listen to the voices of the Hibakusha and make known to the world the damage and after effects of the A-bombing, and develop massive cooperation befitting the goal set for the "International Hibakusha Appeal Signature Campaign". We will hold a successful Nationwide Peace March, marking its 60th anniversary. Let us bring the results of these movements to Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August. In local communities, workplaces and school campuses, let us learn the present situation of and future perspectives for a world without nuclear weapons, and set about preparing for joining and sending your representatives to the 2018 World Conference against A and H Bombs.

Brief Schedule of the World Conference:
August 2-4: International Meeting
August 4-6: World Conference - Hiroshima
- Aug. 4: Opening Plenary
- Aug. 5: Forum & Workshops
- Aug. 6: Closing Plenary

August 8-9: Nagasaki Conference
- Aug. 8: Forum
- Aug. 9: Nagasaki Day Rally

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UN

World Investment Forum 2018
Geneva, 22–26 October

The Secretary-General of UNCTAD presents his compliments to the member States of UNCTAD and has the honour to inform them that the World Investment Forum, celebrating its 10-year anniversary, will be held from 22 to 26 October 2018 at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland.

The Forum is a multi-stakeholder gathering at the level of Heads of State and Government, ministers, chief executive officers and principals of international organizations, designed to facilitate dialogue and action on the world's current and emerging investment development challenges. It is recognized by Governments and business leaders as the pre-eminent global gathering for investment policymaking, providing a platform for interacting with participants ranging from the heads of investment promotion agencies, investment treaty negotiators, impact investors and foundations, investment lawyers, academics, stock exchange executives and pension and sovereign wealth fund managers, to international accounting standard setters, corporate social responsibility monitors, entrepreneurs and representatives of non-governmental organizations.

World Investment Forum 2018 will focus on the global challenges to international investment in the new era of globalization and industrialization. It will provide an opportunity for open dialogues between all investment stakeholders, the brainstorming of solution-oriented initiatives and the fostering of global partnerships to advance prosperity for all.

The previous Forums, held in Ghana (2008), China (2010), Qatar (2012), Switzerland (2014) and Kenya (2016), gathered over 3,000 investment development actors from some 150 countries.
World Investment Forum 2018 will feature numerous high-profile events and networking opportunities, including global leaders investment summits, ministerial round tables, an international investment agreements conference, minister and business executive dialogues, several multi-stakeholder sessions on special themes, a global sustainable stock exchanges dialogue, an investment promotion conference, private-sector led discussions and United Nations awards ceremonies. World Investment Forum 2018 also provides an opportunity for high-level thematic events organized in partnership with other international organizations.

Regular updates on World Investment Forum 2018 and registration will be posted on the UNCTAD website :http://worldinvestmentforum.unctad.org/.

Mukhisa Kituyi
Secretary-General of UNCTAD

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Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy
Third session
Geneva, 9 and 10 July 2018

The third session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy will be held in Geneva, Switzerland, on 9 and 10 July 2018. The session will open at 10 a.m. on Monday, 9 July, in Room XVII of the Palais des Nations.

Background and purpose of the meeting

In line with the agreed conclusions (TD/B/C.I/CPLP/9) adopted by the Intergovernmental Group of Experts at its second session on 4 July 2017, the consultations at the third session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts will focus on the following topics:

- The protection of financial consumers
- Review of capacity-building and technical assistance on consumer protection law and policy
- Voluntary peer review on consumer protection law and policy of Morocco
- Dispute resolution and redress
- Consumer product safety
- Report on the working groups on e-commerce and the protection of vulnerable and disadvantaged consumers

Written contributions
To facilitate the deliberations and the informal exchange of experiences and best practices on the topics to be discussed, member States and observers are requested to submit written contributions to the UNCTAD secretariat by Friday, 1 June 2018, to allow participants to prepare for the meeting.

Participation
This meeting is open to all member States of UNCTAD. Other organizations, including specialized agencies, intergovernmental bodies and non-governmental organizations in the general category, may participate as observers.

Online registration at Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy, third session is mandatory for all those wishing to attend the meeting and is required for inclusion in the list of participants. Early registration – before 11 June 2018 – is advisable so that timely approval may be received for the issuance of a ground pass to the Palais des Nations. In addition, prospective participants must upload an official letter of nomination to represent an organization at this meeting to complete the registration process. For government representatives, a note verbale or an email from the permanent mission concerned in Geneva will suffice.

Further enquiries regarding registration should be sent to the UNCTAD secretariat, Intergovernmental Support Service, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10; fax: 41 22 917 0214; email: meetings@unctad.org.

Further information and contact details
Substantive and other enquiries should be addressed to the UNCTAD secretariat, Competition and Consumer Policies Branch; fax: +41 22 917 0044; email: jacqueline.bouvier@unctad.org.

Mukhisa Kituyi
Secretary-General of UNCTAD

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On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
ROUND TABLE
"DECONSTRUCTING RACIAL NARRATIVES: CHALLENGING ASSUMPTIONS AND FOSTERING DIVERSITY"
Wednesday 21 March 2018 at 3 p.m., UNESCO Paris
I will be attending

UNESCO's Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice, adopted in 1978, still echoes its relevance in contemporary debates, attitudes and practices.

"Deconstructing racial narratives: challenging assumptions and fostering diversity", is a round table seeking to understand and deconstruct the racial narratives that have proliferated in history, including during the present time; as well as to capture and explain the scientific evidence that could contribute to the dissipation of racism, racialization and discriminations.

Keynote lecturer
Dr Évelyne Heyer, Professor of Anthropological Genetics at the National Museum of Natural History (France).

Speakers
Dr Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
Ms Rita Izsák-Ndiaye, Expert member of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (OHCHR);
Mr Lukwago Erias, Mayor of Kampala City (Uganda).

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UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

NOTIFICATION
Commission on Science and Technology for Development
Geneva, 14–18 May 2018

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Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Competition Law and Policy
Seventeenth session
Geneva, 11–13 July 2018

The seventeenth session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Competition Law and Policy will be held in Geneva, Switzerland, from 11 to 13 July 2018. The session will open in Room XVII of the Palais des Nations at 3 p.m. on Wednesday, 11 July.

Background documents and agenda

In line with the agreed conclusions adopted by the Intergovernmental Group of Experts at its sixteenth session (TD/B/C.I/CLP/47), held on 5–7 July 2017, the consultations at the seventeenth session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts will focus on the following topics:

- Review of UNCTAD capacity-building activities
- Report on the discussion group on international cooperation
- Voluntary peer review on the competition law and policy of Botswana
- Review of UNCTAD repository of best-practice tools
- Competition issues concerning the sale of audiovisual rights for major sports events
- Challenges faced by developing countries in competition and regulation in the maritime transport sector
- Revision of chapters V and VI of the Model Law on Competition

Written contributions

To facilitate the deliberations and the informal exchange of experiences and best practices on the topics to be discussed, member States and observers are requested to submit written contributions to the UNCTAD secretariat by Friday, 1 June 2018, to allow participants to prepare for the Intergovernmental Group of Experts.

Participation

This meeting is open to all member States of UNCTAD. Other organizations, including specialized agencies, intergovernmental bodies and non-governmental organizations in the general category, may participate as observers.

Online registration at Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Competition Law and Policy, seventeenth session is mandatory for all those wishing to attend the meeting and is required for inclusion in the list of participants. Early registration – before 27 June 2018 – is advisable so that timely approval may be received for the issuance of a ground pass to the Palais des Nations. In addition, prospective participants must upload an official letter of nomination to represent an organization at this meeting to complete the registration process. For government representatives, a note verbale or an email from the permanent mission concerned in Geneva will suffice.

Mukhisa Kituyi
Secretary-General of UNCTAD

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